



The Weekly Page

VOLUME 10 ISSUE 8

MARCH 7, 2014

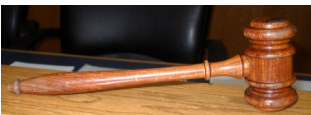
Pages Learn About Legislature



Big ideas in government

Throughout the week pages grappled with understanding the three “big ideas” for a representative government: governing is a complex process, successful democracies rely on responsible citizens, and government affects our life every day. As they participated in daily discussions, listened to guest speakers, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding around the concepts deepened. On Friday, they wrote about one of the big ideas to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.

Pages write bills, hold mock hearings



During the first three days of their week, pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which

were relevant to them and the state. They discussed the criteria for making a legislative solution work before selecting issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates on class computers to formulate official-looking documents in preparation for mock committee hearings on Thursday. Topics for policy bills included gun violence, plastic bag pollution, welfare fraud and smoking in cars. Pages read their bills and class “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. A “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation was then voted upon, allowing a bill to continue on in the legislative process. As in the real political system, some bills died in committee.

Lawmakers Make the Healthier Choice

Olympia – House Bill 1116 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Abby Mihaiuc, Elise Wohler, and Mariah Curtiss.

“This bill addresses the issue of genetically modified organisms and will require food distributors to label their products if they contain genetically modified organisms,” said Rep. Wohler. Only 52 percent of Amer-



icans realized that genetically modified foods are sold in grocery stores and only 26 percent believe that they have ever eaten genetically modified foods. In order to help consumers make healthier decisions regarding food purchases, the Legislature will require food companies that produce food in Washington State to label foods that are genetically modified on the nutrition label of their product. If the product does not contain any trace of genetically modified organisms, manufacturers may put the official “GMO Free” label on the front of the package.

Watch us live at TVW.org

Search for “Page School” in the Archives to watch yourself in the committee hearings.

Representatives take a step towards solving the sleep deprivation crisis among teens

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Katheryn Dick, Avery Matson, and Taylor Tracer introduced House Bill 1672, which addresses the issue of sleep deprivation. “This bill is a good one because it will allow teens to wake later in the morning in order to accommodate for the two hour interruption in circadian rhythms during the teen years,” Rep. Matson said. Teens in our State have been seen in the morning not all the way tuned into what is happening around them. If districts don’t start school before 8:30 a.m., the teens will get more sleep, and therefore they will be more aware during the school day.



Parting With Plastic



Olympia – Senate Bill 6333 was introduced yesterday by Senators Rachel Lewis and Catherine Neeser. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bags used to bag products at retail and grocery stores. It will dramatically decrease their use in Washington State providing for various positive results in both today and our future world,” said Sen. Lewis. This bill levies a tax of 20 cents on each plastic bag used by a customer at retail and grocery stores. The tax money will be added to general funds used for environmental cleanup or recycling. This bill is enacted in order to prevent harm to sea life, unnecessary pollution, and decrease the waste in Washington State landfills.

Later School Times?

Olympia – House Bill 1337 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Michaels and Shoop. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprived teens and will help students focus on school work even more,” said Rep. Shoop. Studies show that sleep deprivation impairs the ability to pay attention, and impairs creativity, communication, problem solving, decision making, mood and motivation. This bill will require all public high schools to start after 8:30 am. Thus far, individual schools or districts in 19 states have pushed back their start times, and more than 100 school districts in an additional 17 states are considering delaying their start times.



Senators’ bill to improve Washington's health

Olympia – Senate Bill 6728 was introduced yesterday by Senators Makayla Towry and Mia Patrick. “This bill addresses the issue of the additives in food and will help prevent further harm to our state's health,” said Sen. Patrick. This could be beneficial by requiring companies to implement a label makeover. In order to improve the current labels, we propose to make the text more readable by enlarging important facts; for example, the calorie count, or by placing bullets in between ingredients and additives. Bill



6728 will require the companies to follow a low to high rating scale for ingredients within the product. If the percentage of a serving is given a "high" rating, the company is required to include possible health effects if too much is consumed. Senators plan to pass bill to improve Washington's health!

Why is Our Nation So Fat?!

Olympia_ Yesterday, Senator Sally Martin, Tevon Lautenbach, and Sophia Leis-Altaras introduced Senate Bill 6240, which addresses the issue of childhood obesity. “The bill is a good one because it will reduce the percentage of obese children in America, therefore reducing the money the government spends on healthcare each year by a drastic number,” the Senators noted. In America alone, 68 % of America’s adult population is obese, 1 in 3 children are obese, and the numbers are still skyrocketing. An obese man racks up about \$1,152 extra charges in medical spending, and obese women account for an extra \$3,613 a year.

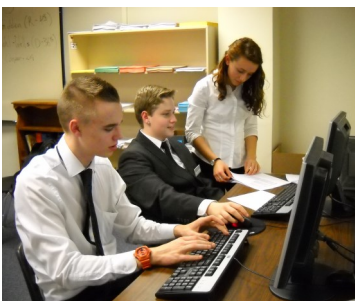


The adults pass bad habits onto their kids, from unhealthy eating to sleeping disorders, exercise decrease, stress intolerance and perhaps even all around laziness. The children, in turn, pass it onto their kids, teaching them to eat things anywhere from cheesecake to candy bars, burgers, chips, soda, and processed junk. The school environment is also partially at fault for: a) not including the necessary education about the dangers of processed food, excess eating and poor diet and nutrition in the curriculum, and b) for not enforcing this information and not providing healthy foods in the cafeteria (if they have one), such as good quality fruits, vegetables and salads, organic bread and lunch meats, and a

variety of snacks like granola bars, yogurt, and trail mix. The solution to this problem would be to strongly enforce the need to eat healthily, and wean children off of their love for sugar and fast food.

House bill proposing a healthier, new generation of kids in Washington State

Olympia – House Bill 2478 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Sequoia Pullella Barca, Maxwell Elkins, and James Juntti. “This bill addresses the issue of childhood obesity and



will improve children's health,” said Rep. Barca. The focus is to improve children's health across the state by requiring a serving of fresh fruit or vegetables to accompany every main course given to the students. Currently, 80 percent of high school students don't

get the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables. This problem can begin to be addressed at school, where many students receive an easily regulated meal. By providing students with the means to improve their diet, students now have the opportunity to improve their health. As the system changes, students can be educated to improve their meal choices out of school as well.

Clear Cutting Regulations

Olympia – House Bill 1930 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Boomer Lusink and Astrid DuBois. “This bill addresses the issue of clear cutting and will increase reforestation regulations,” said Rep. Lusink. A study done on clear cut forests show that recovery of plant diversity was so slow that 87 years was an insufficient time to detect recovery. Studies also show that the activities essential for the use



of clear cutting are damaging to the water quality of nearby sources. When soil sediments from clear cutting settle, they cover lake bottoms and stream beds and smother food sources and fish spawning sites. In the Olympic Peninsula, clear-cutting felled 29 percent of all forests, including 36 percent of forests without federal protection from 1971 to 2002. Our solution is to require reforestation standards to be more strict. In WAC Chapter 222-34, the Legislature will increase the number of growing seasons. Currently the regulated amount of time is only one

growing season. It will be increased to when the area contains an average of 190 or more vigorous, undamaged commercial species seedlings per acre that have survived on site for at 5 growing seasons.

A Woman's Right to Her Life

Olympia- Today, Senators Jennifer Grossman and Sunielove McBride introduced Senate Bill 6224 which addresses issues with insurance companies covering abortions. Referring to the



reproductive privacy act “The state may not delay nor interfere with a woman's right to choose to have an abortion prior to viability of the fetus, or to protect her life or health.” Women in Washing-

ton would continue to have the same rights and protections.

Women have the right to their own life and what they do, and what is best for them. The government shouldn't tell a woman what will and won't help in her life, because only that one person would know what is good and bad for their health.

Read Now!! Babies Depend On It!!

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Towry and Milarch introduced House Bill 2468, which addresses the issue of abortion. “The bill is a good one because it will save many lives of newborns,” Rep. Towry said. It is really easy in Washington State to get an abortion. Just in 2011, there were 20,048 abortions of all ages and varieties of people. All minors 17 and younger will be required to have parental permission to get an abortion.



Senators Introduce Bill for Livestock In Eastern Washington

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Richard Brandt and Riley Halvorson introduced Senate Bill 6121, which addresses the issue of wolves and livestock. “The bill is a good one be-

cause it will reduce the slaughter of cattle in Eastern Washington,” Sen. Halvorson and Brandt argue. Wolves are killing livestock in Eastern Washington. In order to decrease the live-



stock killed by wolves, the Legislature will allow hunting of wolves in areas where livestock have been killed. Each year 10 tags will be available for hunters. Only female wolves will be allowed to be hunted. By hunting females in each pack, it will reduce the reproduction of wolves.

Hunger Strikes Washington

Olympia – Senate Bill 5818 was introduced yesterday by Senators Willow Morkert and Sydney Morkert. “This bill addresses the issue of hunger in Washington State and will fix the number of hungry people,” said Sen. Morkert. This bill will provide cards that will give struggling people money to purchase certain food. Taxes will not be raised because the money will come from the General Fund.



The participants will do community service for state wide and local agencies and organizations.

Ditching Plastic Bags

Olympia – House Bill 2929 was introduced yesterday by Representatives DJ Lambert, George Drumheller, Mason Watrous. “This bill addresses the issue of plastic bags in grocery stores and will ban all plastic bags and replace them with either paper, reusable fabric or decomposable plastic bags,” said Rep. Lambert. Plastic bags take around 500-1000 years to decompose in landfills; wasting and taking up valuable space in landfills. 100 billion plastic bags are thrown out each year contributing to the littering of oceans and accidental killing of marine animals. In addition, plastic bags waste valuable oil and release toxins into the atmosphere when burned.



Senators Strive for More Student Sleep!



Olympia – Senate Bill 5779 was introduced yesterday by Senators Taylor Junt and Bailey Inama. “This bill addresses the issue of teen sleep deprivation and will ensure teens

will get more sleep so learning will be easier for them,” said Sen. Junt. The Legislature finds that teenagers are not getting enough sleep. “Over time, sleep deprivation leads to serious consequences for academic achievement, social behavior, and the health and safety of our nation’s youth,” said Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA). Individual schools in 19 states have pushed back their start times and 100 school districts and 17 states are considering delaying their start times. By creating later start times we will help the future of our youth giving them an advantage in their education and health.

Help for teenagers who are sleep deprived

Olympia – House Bill 3998 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Cole Steere and Emir Turarov. “This bill addresses the issue of sleep deprivation and will promote learning from high school students,” said Rep. Steere and Turarov. Evidence shows that 60 percent of children under the age of 18 complained of being tired during the day according to their parents. Plus 15 percent said they fell asleep at school during the year. A study found that students assigned to start classes before 8 a.m. performed worse not only in their first period course, but in all of their courses. One expert, William Cl. Dement, MD, PhD, Stanford University, said that “teenagers that do not get enough sleep have worse grades, more depression, anxiety, irritability, and somatic complaints; poorer attendance; and a greater tendency toward delinquency and violence.”



Senate plans to increase funding for affordable housing for homeless

Olympia – Senate Bill 5679 was introduced yesterday by Senator Jesus Calvillo. “This bill addresses the issue of homeless people in Washington State and will provide more temporary shelters for our citizens,” said Sen. Calvillo. An average of 44 percent of the nation’s population is unsheltered. In this state close to 11,000 homeless are under the age of 6 years old. If this bill becomes law, cities will be required to provide shelter for their homeless. There is currently a state fund for acquiring and rehabilitating over 4,500 units every two years. To increase money for the fund so more units can be built, the Legislature will increase taxes on building materials.



Bill Protects Mental Health of Prisoners

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Benjamin Vincent, Joshua Julagay, and Gabriel Munson introduced Senate Bill 5738, which addresses the issue of solitary confinement. “The bill is a good one because it will protect the rights to life of prisoners in the State of Washington and ensure their potential for a good future,” Sen. Vincent said. Solitary confinement is destroying the mental health of prisoners and ruining their chances of being reentered into society and living a normal life. Research shows that solitary confinement does not in any way fulfill its purpose of limiting violence. Instead, it simply creates more



violence and completely destroys any chance at a normal future. Damon Thibodeaux, who was held in solitary confinement in Louisiana for 15 years, described the experience as “torture, pure and simple.”

The complete lack of any constructive stimulation for prisoners causes only harm. Being locked in a room the size of a parking space for 23 hours a day can do nothing good. In addition to mental damage, physical harm is common- anxiety attacks, insomnia, self-harm, and suicide have all been results of this dangerous practice. “We truly believe in this bill, as it will help to fulfill the purpose of government and protect the people, their rights, and their sanctity of life,” said Sen. Vincent.

Packaging Control

Olympia – Senate Bill 5010 was introduced yesterday by Senators Tamara McCormack and Sarah McAuley.

“This bill addresses the issue of packaging control and will help keep our state clean and help sea life,” said Sen. McCormack. The Legislature finds that the amount of packaging companies use comprises the majority of waste in landfills. Litter that ends up in the ocean kills sea turtles and a variety of other marine animals, because they often mistake it for food.



Senate to Address the Issue of Second Hand Smoke in Vehicles

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sisson, Schmitt, and Ramm introduced Senate Bill 5472, which addresses the issue of second hand smoke. “The bill is a good one because it will protect children against dangerous chemicals produced from second hand smoke,” Sen. Sisson said. The bill would prohibit drivers from smoking with minors in the car. This would protect children from over 250 chemicals that they are exposed to in the enclosed space of the car. Arizona and Louisiana passed a similar bill to decrease health risks for minors who do not have a choice on whether or not to be exposed to these deadly toxins. It is possible for people who have never smoked to get cancers and other deadly conditions from second hand smoke. 1,500 people die daily of cancer in the United States. Some of those could be prevented purely by children not being exposed to second hand smoke early on in their lives. A fine of 100 dollars will be given to violators.



Motion Sensors in Every Room

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Sophie Bustetter and Susanna Cate introduced Senate Bill 5555 which addresses the issue of energy in public schools. “This bill is a good one because it saves money, reduces carbon footprints, and teaches students the importance of being environmentally aware,” said Sen. Cate. Because public schools spend over \$7.5 billion on energy each year and 20% of that money is spent on lighting, this bill will require each room of the public schools to be equipped with sensors. These sensors will detect movement within the room and automatically shut off the lights when no one is present.



Guest speakers visit Page School

Sen. Mike Padden (R-4th), Rep. Jake Fay (D-27th), and Legislative Assistant to Sen. Kohl-Wells—Adam Cooper, joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. All guests shared insightful information about their jobs. Pages were able to ask questions and sharing their own views in response to the speakers' comments.



Competitive edge results in *Jeopardy* win

On Friday pages tested their knowledge of the Legislative process in a spirited game of *Jeopardy*. Winning teams were awarded certificates and brightly colored stickers that they wore proudly for the rest of the day.

Page School on the web

The Page School has its own web site. You can find us at: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool> This newsletter has been posted there.

Experienced Teachers

Sharon Heath is in her first year as the Page School teacher; however, she is definitely not new to the Washington Legislature having worked nearly 20 years for the Legislature's computer support agency. She has also earned a Master's in Education and has taught middle school as well as college students.

Leo O'Leary has been teaching and coaching in and around Olympia for the past ten years and is in his third session as a Page School teacher. "I really like the fact that I can help kids make their dreams come true through both education and athletics," he said as he introduced himself on Monday.



Page program over 120 years old

The Legislative page program has been in existence since 1891. This photo is of pages who served in past years. The first female page served in 1937. In the past, pages were required to do ironing and cleaning for members. Page duties today are much more professional and include delivering campus correspondence, helping with mailings in legislative offices, and handing out documents on the floor of the Senate and House.

